

Appln No. 10/750,501
Amdt date October 31, 2007
Reply to Office action of September 5, 2007

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office action dated September 5, 2007, the Examiner rejected claims 13-16, 19-22 and 25 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as allegedly anticipated by Stewart, et al. (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0111618). However, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 13, 22, 25 and 28 to recite a generally bulb-shaped tip electrode. Stewart fails to teach or suggest such a feature. Accordingly, independent claims 1, 13, 22, 25 and 28, and all claims dependent therefrom, including claims 2-12, 14-21, 26, 27 and 29, are allowable over Stewart.

The Examiner also rejected claims 1-12, 17-20 and 26-29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly obvious over Stewart in view of one or more of Bowe, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,771,996) and Webster, Jr. (U.S. Patent No. 5,836,875). However, independent claims 1, 13, 22, 25 and 28 are allowable over Stewart as discussed above. Neither Bowe nor Webster, Jr. remedy the deficiencies of Stewart as neither reference discloses a generally bulb-shaped tip electrode. Accordingly, independent claims 1, 13, 22, 25 and 28, and all claims dependent therefrom, including claims 2-12, 17-20, 26, 27 and 29, are allowable over Stewart, Bowe and Webster, Jr.

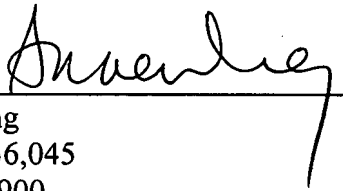
Claims 1-22 and 25-29 remain pending in this application. By this amendment, Applicant has amended claims 1, 13, 22, 25 and 28 to place the claims in condition for allowance. The amendments find full support in the original specification, claims and drawings, and no new matter is presented. In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that all of pending claims 1-22 and 25-29 are in condition for allowance. Applicant

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therefore, respectfully requests a timely indication of allowance. However, if there are any remaining issues that can be addressed by telephone, Applicant invites the Examiner to contact Applicant's counsel at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,
CHRISTIE, PARKER & HALE, LLP

By


Anne Wang
Reg. No. 36,045
626/795-9900

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